1:Spier E-5 (1929-1932) 1933 NT15 River Yumans NT15
Kohuana Maricopa
Halyikwamai Halchidhoma

CHAPTER III

HOUSES

342 The Maricopa dwelling was dome-shaped, markedly flattened on top, and earth-covered. It was built on a central rectangular frame of posts linked by rafters, surrounded by a circular wall of poles bent over to be tied to the rafters, thatched, and dirt-covered. The construction was identical with that of the Pima [171] and Papago and different from the earth-covered, but rectangular, hip-roofed houses of Mohave and Yuma. Halchidhoma houses, and possibly those of the two other remnant groups, Kohuana and Halyikwamai, were identical with the Maricopa, at least since they joined the last on the Gila. Kutox insisted that 115 he had been told that still earlier the Halchidhoma houses on the 175 Colorado River had been of the same form. (He knew the rec- 342 tangular Mohave house.) But it is more than probable that he was mistaken since the known house forms of the lower Colorado (Mohave, Kamia, and Yuma) were all rectangular. Garcés in May 1774 remarked that the Halchidhoma "have better and larger houses than any I have seen" among the Yuma and on the Gila.[1]

177 342 The modern houses in the Maricopa community are for the most part of the Mexican jacal type: a rectangular structure having walls formed of posts at short intervals, with adobe between, held in place and protected against the wash of rain by horizontal ribs of the inner wood of the giant cactus nailed in place. The roof is flat, consisting of beams, sticks, brush and dirt (Pl. III, *A*, *C*). A solitary house of different construction was the home of the last surviving Kohuana in 1930 (Pl. III, *B*). It has the same wall posts and roof. The walls are thatched, however, with thick layers of arrowweed, held in place by horizontal willow branches inside and out, tied together through the thatch at intervals. This was [171] said to be in imitation of the Mexicans, but the form is known to Pima and Papago.[2] There are now no houses of the ancient type.

34 Anciently house constructions included the flat-domed, earth-covered dwelling; the meeting house, which was but a larger

[1] Bolton, *Anza's California Expeditions*, II, 386.

[2] Kissell, *Basketry of the Papago and Pima*, p. 147.

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Maricopa

edition of the dwelling; an open-sided, flat-roofed shade; a small structure resembling a gable roof set directly on the ground, built as needed for a storage house, for purification rites, for a girl's puberty rite, and as a menstrual hut. A small hemispherical sweat lodge was also built. Sometimes a temporary kitchen was made by erecting a screen of weeds to windward of the cooking place.

Housebuilding was man's work alone, whether a dwelling, storehouse, or meeting house: the women did not assist. A man was helped by his male friends and relatives in the construction of his dwelling. In building a meeting house, all the men of the village were engaged and built it in a day.

Dwellings stood indefinitely, until some one of the inmates died, when they were torn down and burned. This also happened on the infrequent occasions when relatives who had married were mourned as dead. A new house was erected elsewhere, so that the community was constantly crawling away from its original location. So great was the decimation from disease and warfare during the past century, that the shifting went on with some rapidity despite the localizing ties of available water supply and tillage. The movement may have been somewhat less in earlier times, but there is no doubt that the habit of shifting the locus is old and ingrained. Houses did not suffer much from the elements; rainfall is slight and confined largely to the spring, snow practically never falls. The dirt covering of the house needs no renewal; at most, it must be patched here and there.

The size of the dwelling naturally depended on the number of inmates it was intended to house. An average dwelling was about eighteen to twenty feet in diameter, larger houses perhaps twenty-five feet: Bartlett (1852) says fifteen to twenty-five feet.[3] It was built on level ground, no excavation being made.

For the ordinary dwelling, four cottonwood posts were set in the ground at the corners of a square, measuring nine or ten feet. These stood as high as a man could reach, about seven or eight feet, so that he could work at the ridge. (It must be remembered that these people are quite tall.) Yet Bartlett wrote, "These

[3] Bartlett, *Personal Narrative*, II, 234.